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## CANADIAN NATIONALISM AND THE IMPERIAL TIE

BY G. M. WRONG

*University of Toronto*

When I speak of Canadian nationalism, I mean that, for better or worse, we have on this continent, not one nation of British origin, but two nations, the one as completely resolved to go its own way as the other. Canada, like the United States, a great federation, has now nearly 8,000,000 people, about three times as many as had the United States when it became independent. Moving on its own lines, Canada is rapidly completing the apparatus of national life. It is taking steps to build a navy to be under its own control. It negotiates its own commercial treaties. Questions between Canada and other countries are settled now, not from London, but from Ottawa. The British ambassador to the United States, who is with us to-day, has a more difficult task, in some respects, than any other diplomat at Washington for he serves two nations, and not merely one. It is our British habit to leave things in theory, quite different from what they are in fact. In theory the king still rules; in fact he has no political power and the prime minister, a person unknown to the law, rules; in theory Canada is a colony; in fact it is an independent nation.

For a country in the new world, Canada has a tolerably long history. Jacques Cartier sailed up the St. Lawrence nearly 400 years ago, and some of the place-names still in use were given by him at that time. All Canada looks back for its beginning to the early days of French rule. The story of Cartier and of Champlain is told in history text-books from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It is a singular paradox of history that an English-speaking community should claim as their national heritage the traditions of the French who founded Canada rather than those of their own race who settled Virginia and Massachusetts. But so it is, and the fact shows how composite are the elements in the Canada of today. French and English, Catholic and Protestant, have united here to form a nation, on lines quite different from any to be found elsewhere. The Parliament

at Ottawa is bi-lingual. A member speaking in English may be answered by a fellow member who addresses the house in French, Debates and public documents are printed in both languages.

The French element in Canada has remained Catholic, almost to a man, and probably two-fifths of the Canadian people are adherents of that faith. They have fought strenuously to keep up the teaching of religion in their schools and now, in sharp contrast with what is found in the United States, some of the Canadian provinces have state-supported schools, teaching definite religious dogmas. This state recognition of differences in religion has, without doubt, produced a great effect on Canadian life. Religious bodies, as such, occupy a place in Canada markedly different from what they have in the United States. Canadian society holds strenuously to certain old-fashioned views. The Roman Catholic church has set its face against easy divorce. Though Nova Scotia and British Columbia have, I believe, reserved some powers to grant divorce, in other parts of Canada a divorce can be secured only by special act of the federal parliament. So old-fashioned are parts of Canada that, to this day, the lectures in philosophy in Laval University are given in the Latin tongue.

Perhaps nothing has aided more to keep up old traditions in Canada than the continuance of the monarchical idea. To the average citizen of the United States, a king is a remote person, the embodiment possibly of senseless tyranny, but belonging, at any rate, completely to another world. A land that has a king seems strange indeed. No doubt the use of his name is little more than a convention in the work of government, but it preserves an old mode of thought. In the law courts the king brings various actions against other persons, as sometimes other persons bring actions against him. The initials E. R., *Edwardus Rex*, are to be seen exposed in many places. It counts for something that Canada has today a King Edward, as England had more than six hundred years ago, when that mighty *Malleus Scotorum* not only smote Wallace but also began to rear the fabric of law under which we live to this day. It gives this new society, in this new world, a certain old-world flavor that *Edwardus Rex* is still on the throne. The link with the past is unbroken. The contrast in outlook with that of a republic is sharp and important.

Other differences strike the observer. Canadian newspapers, in the east, at least, are different from those of the United States. In contrasting them one sees that the United States represents in some

ways, a more advanced society. It would not be profitable for Canadian newspapers to discuss the questions of art and letters that I find the Boston *Transcript*, for instance, taking up. Canadian society has not the links with continental Europe that Canada's more affluent neighbor has developed, and that furnish many topics to the press. Another difference is that Canadian newspapers are less personal in their discussion of public men. Social customs vary in the two countries. A colleague of mine, who lived for a time in Washington, has not yet recovered from the amazement of his hostess when he ventured to make an evening call in Toronto. There is even a manner of speech peculiar to Canada, and I have not a word to say in its praise.

Canadian nationalism is perhaps best illustrated by the type of federal institutions which it has developed. It is a commonplace of the constitutional histories that while, in the United States, the non-delegated powers remain with the individual states, in Canada they remain with the central government. Thus, in Canada, the theory is that the people form one whole, with one supreme parliament, on the model of that of the United Kingdom. Certain powers have been delegated to subordinate legislatures, but ultimate political power is with the people as a whole. I suppose that, in fact, if not in theory, this has been the situation in the United States, since the civil war. But in the United States the individual state is still in some ways a sovereign commonwealth. It has the power of life and death over its citizens, it has its own distinct law courts, with judges of its own creation. In Canada the federal government alone has the power of life and death; it alone appoints judges; one set of courts administers both federal and provincial law. We do not speak in Canada of members from Ontario, or Quebec, or Nova Scotia, as, in the Congress of the United States, members from Missouri or Iowa are referred to. We speak instead of the member for Toronto or Winnipeg or Vancouver, his own constituency; they all are Canadians and it does not matter what province they come from. We have two great national political parties, definitely organized under permanent leaders. To us the two parties in the United States without recognized national leaders, except just on the eve of an election, seem headless and we find it hard to understand the phrases "Leader of the Majority," and "Leader of the Minority." Our parties are for or against the government, under rather strict party discipline. We have, in a word, the English system of party, grafted on to federal institutions.

Instead of a term of two years as in the United States the term of a Canadian parliament is five years. But the House of Commons can force an election at any time, by simply refusing to support the cabinet in power. We never have any antagonism in Canada between the legislature and the executive power, such, as rumor says, sometimes exists in the United States, and the reason is simple enough. The legislative power turns out of office any executive that it does not like and installs one to its own mind. One of the most difficult things for a Canadian, as well for an Englishman, to understand in the United States is how a government can work that is not, by the presence of cabinet ministers in the legislative body, in close touch with the law-making and money-granting power from day to day. That it does work we, of course, see.

Another thing that strikes us in the almost predominant, certainly the co-equal, power of the second chamber in the United States. I do not know what will be the case in Great Britain soon, but in Canada we have practically no second chamber. As I say this I am aware that Canadian senators would rise in indignant protest against such a statement. There is a Canadian Senate. It is a useful body, which does much hard work on the details of Acts of Parliament. But it is not elected and thus represents no one; it has no real hold on the people; and it has never resisted the will of the House of Commons on any important question. It is shadowy, indeed, compared with that masterful body which sits at Washington.

If Canada has a national type different from that of the United States it is different also from Great Britain. In some respects, a Canadian is more at home in the United States than in England. He finds the hereditary rank, the stratified society, the sharp distinction of classes in Great Britain rather oppressive. An attempt to set up in Canada such conditions was indeed made, just after the American Revolution. Canada was to have a hereditary House of Lords, but conditions made the proposal absurd and, for good or evil, Canada has today as complete a democracy as has any republic.

If I have said enough to show that there is such a thing as Canadian nationalism it is time to discuss the imperial tie. Why does Canada remain linked with Great Britain? Was it not Mr. Roosevelt who spoke pityingly of the Canadian people as half-slave, half-free? Canada retains the tie with Great Britain because there has never been any reason why she should sever it. There was a reason why the United States should break the tie and broken it was. Canada

could now break it without a struggle. The Canadian parliament has long been a body practically supreme. If it chose to make a declaration of independence, probably not a blow would be struck to prevent it, and few of us would be conscious that any real change had taken place. Yet the tie with Great Britain would end. No doubt there would be a good many things for the lawyers to adjust, but the average man would hardly feel a jar.

But the tie will not be broken. It is natural and even necessary to Canada. The world has seen three types of relation between a mother country and her offspring. The Greeks went out, founded new colonies, and copied the institutions of the mother land. But, from the first, these colonies were completely independent. As they prospered, they were apt to assume airs of superiority, and to take rather a patronising interest in the home land. The tie was merely sentimental; one state exercised no sort of control over the other.

The second type of relation appears after the discovery of America. Then Europe sought to exploit America for its own benefit. Colonies were to be sources of profit. That this kind of tie was unnatural and mischievous is perhaps proved best by the fact that it has not endured. There was a time when the whole of the two continents of North and South America were in one way or other "possessions" of European powers. All this has ended. Except the island of Newfoundland, Canada is the only land in North America that retains any tie with a European state, and assuredly Canada is not a "possession" of Great Britain, but of its own people. Why this change? Well, Canada was almost invited to go too. Lord Beaconsfield, the great conservative leader in Britain, is on record as having desired to be rid of Canada, and some liberals, too, once thought that they had enough for the energies of the British people in dealing with great home questions. They wished to destroy class privilege, to improve the condition of the masses, to end the misrule of Ireland. They feared the complications with other peoples that colonies might bring. We have been told how, during the American Civil War, it was suggested that if the North would let the South go, it might have Canada as compensation. The bargain was not made, it could not be made, as you well know, for many reasons! One of these is that it then was, as it still is, for Canada to settle her own destiny.

Now a new school of thought has made itself heard and we have the third type of relation. The old colonial theory of great colonies, subordinate to the mother land, is dead, dead beyond hope of resur-

rection, and something nobler has taken its place. This is its chief thought: why should not peoples of the same origin, with similar modes of political thought, with institutions closely related, remain linked together for the benefit of all? They would certainly never war on each other. Peaceful intercourse would be their ideal, they could aid in promoting each other's trade, and their weight in the councils of the world would be a unit. This is the present theory of the British empire—a league of free states acting together for their common interests.

Let me note some of the causes which preserve this union.

(1) Natural growth is better than revolution. Every state tries to avoid revolution, which comes always as an evil, sometimes, however, an evil less than the greater one which revolution throws off. Let any one look at the bitterness of party strife in France to-day and then ask himself whether that land would not be happier if liberty had been gained without revolution. It has been so gained in Canada, which has, in consequence, preserved unbroken, as her own, the whole range of the traditions of British history.

(2) Partnership between Canada and Great Britain is in the interests of both. The time has come when Great Britain needs Canada, quite as much as Canada needs Great Britain. The consolidation of power in modern states is a startling fact. By such consolidation, it has happened that Germany, for instance, has one and a half times as many people as Great Britain, and might be able to overwhelm her by the mere weight of numbers. The balance is redressed when we add Canada's growing population and resources to those of Great Britain.

On the other hand, Canada needs Great Britain. Perhaps it is not as easy to-day for a state with a small population to live as it was a century ago. Facility of communication has made the world one. We are all neighbors to each other; all of us know what the others are doing. We watch each other's plans. Strength is centralized in a few great powers. A state of 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 is but a small affair in our world of political giants, and great armaments make such a state, standing alone, practically helpless. Ninety years ago the United States had some 9,000,000 people, very little more than Canada has now. At that time, New York was a city about half the size of the Toronto of to-day. Yet this small people ventured to assert the Monroe Doctrine, to warn off Europe from America. How the world would laugh if Canada should now venture

to make any declaration of such world-wide import! The thought at once occurs that such a step would be impossible, for the United States has already taken the leading place in America. Quite true; but this suggests something else. When the United States began, it had, as it still has, no powerful neighbor, and could go its own way light-heartedly. Canada has a powerful neighbour. Is it not wise for her to retain a tie that gives her more weight in time of difficulty?

If Canada and Great Britain can be useful to each other in face of the outside world they help each other too in their internal relations. John Bull is a wealthy old gentleman with plenty of money to invest. Canada is a vigorous young man, in business for himself, but cramped by lack of capital. What more natural than that one should supply the other? The one thing needful is confidence and this the political tie helps. Owing to this confidence, Canada is able to secure vast sums of money at a very low rate of interest. She has a preferred position in the money market. It is not easy to realize the growth of the financial relations between her and Great Britain in recent years. In 1908, out of total bond issues of more than \$200,000,000, Canada sold 84 per cent in Great Britain. The government and the railways of Canada now owe more than \$800,000,000 in Great Britain—nearly the whole of their bonded debt, and vast sums in municipal and other bonds are also to be added to these figures. It is needless to say that the British investor watches events in Canada closely. It is equally true that in every part of Canada those standards of political and commercial integrity must be followed which will commend themselves to the people of Britain. These have played the game of politics and finance a very long time and expect Canada to conform to their best traditions. That all this exerts a steadying influence in a new country, who can doubt?

(3) The political tie between Canada and Great Britain leads to the working of educative influences between the two countries. British newspapers are now sent to Canada at rates actually lower than those charged in Britain itself. The result is that, in recent years, thousands of them have begun to circulate in Canada. At this moment the people in Canada are watching the political struggle in Britain with close attention. The chief figures in the contest are all familiar to them. The British statesman of to-day is highly trained in his special line; the best life of Britain is in her politics, a fact not wholly true of Canada; and I count it a thing of value that the Canadian should get his political education, not only from his



own leaders, but also from those of Britain. Its effect is real. The arguments for free trade used in Britain have produced a distinct effect in Canada in helping to check high protection. The result is the education of the Canadian in the problems of a mighty empire. It cannot but be broadening, elevating, to a people chiefly inland, and in special danger of being provincial. The interest in these things is keen because the tie is real. Break the tie and the interest flags.

(4) This brings me to one other reason for the tie. It will lead, I hope, to Canada's bearing her share of Britain's burdens. We are commercial people in this western world, and are apt to measure greatness in terms of dollars and cents. I confess to growing a little weary, at times, of hearing how many bushels of grain, of how many millions of dollars in value, the Canadian west is likely to produce. I hope the tie with Britain will help us to add to the outlook in Canada some nobler ideals of world-wide service. Britain controls today the destinies of some 350,000,000 of alien people, unable as yet to govern-themselves, and the easy victims of rapine and injustice, unless a strong arm guards them. She is giving them a rule that has its faults, no doubt, but such, I make bold to affirm, as no conquering state ever before gave to a dependent people. I hope that the tie with Britain may lead Canada to share this burden, and that we shall before long have highly trained young Canadians employed in the great task of governing India. I know not what indiscretion I may be guilty of when I say that I have always been glad that the United States assumed the task of governing an oriental people. To me it seems the highest type of missionary work that a great free state should try to educate another people in its own modes of thought. I am proud to think that my own country may some day have its share in such tasks.

To-day as one surveys the relations between Canada and Great Britain it is evident that some things have still to be adjusted. Canada must bear a heavier share in the work of defending the British Empire than she has yet borne. Even so, however, the cost will be less than it would be, if Canada stood alone. Canada's neighbor, the United States, has found that, to meet possible dangers from the east and from the west, it must make a vast outlay, and Canada, with both an Atlantic and a Pacific seaboard, must have similar protection. She must have it too, not by ignobly hiding behind the skirts of a powerful neighbor, but by bearing her share in a unified

system of British defence. It is not to the credit of our civilization that all the great nations stand today with the hand on the hilt of the sword. A change for the better may come sooner than we now expect. Meanwhile Canada has to build a navy. In its beginnings the value of the imperial tie is apparent at once. A naval college will be established on British lines. The first instructors will, no doubt, be officers from the British navy and thus the traditions of the older fleet will pass naturally to its offshoot in Canada.

For reasons such as these Canada values the imperial tie. No doubt to some it seems to involve inferior status. Many will persist in thinking of Canada as a subordinate colony, and this a high-spirited young nation resents. When we think of the strides it is taking, we see how ludicrous is the notion that such a people can be absorbed by any other, or remain subordinate to any other state. Canada is to-day receiving immigrants at a rate unparalleled in the history of the world; at the same ratio to population 3,500,000 people would land in the United States in a single year. The hard northern climate leaves no room for the loafer. Men must work or freeze. Energy, self-reliance, pride, grow amid such conditions, and they need careful handling. The British and the Canadian people are not likely to agree on all great questions. The public opinion of the two countries has differed and tact is necessary. I believe the causes of possible difference are now few and I do not doubt the permanence of the tie that links these peoples together. My hope for the future is that a Britain, brought daily into closer touch with the vital needs of the masses of her people, and a Canada, sobered and chastened by a grave sense of responsibility as member of a world-wide empire, may work together in pursuit of a high Christian civilization. It may be a dream that a league of states, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, girdling the world, can hold together for common and high aims, but it is surely a noble dream to cherish.